

What documents should I bring to the interview?

Usually you will need:

- several copies of your CV in the appropriate language;
- translation of your diploma (for certain job applications e.g. in the public sector you will need to obtain a certified diploma which is usually available from your education institute or the relevant ministry);
- photocopies of your school leaver's certificate, university degree or other qualification;
- your passport or a valid identity card;
- copy of your birth certificate;
- your European Health Insurance Card and
- some passport photos.

Can I transfer my unemployment benefits if I move to another EEA Member State without having a job offer?

If you are currently out of work and you want to look for a job in another EEA country, you may transfer your unemployment benefits for a maximum of three months. However, there are strict rules and conditions for the transfer of benefits, and you are therefore advised to contact your local employment service or the appropriate benefits agency before taking any action. If you have not found a job after three months, you may be asked to leave, though the authorities may be lenient if you can prove that you have a good chance of finding a job. The same rules apply to citizens of the new Member States joining the EU in May 2004.

For more information on EURES, contact:

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Employment and Social Affairs DG
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Or log on to our web site at:

<http://europa.eu.int/eures>



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Where can I look for work?

Free movement of persons is one of the fundamental freedoms guaranteed by Community law. Part of this freedom concerns the right to live and work in another Member State. In principle, citizens of all countries within the European Economic Area (EEA) (1) are therefore entitled to work in any other EEA country without a work permit.

However, for citizens of Member States joining the EU on 1 May 2004 (except Cyprus and Malta), access to the labour markets of the original 18 EEA Member States may be restricted for a period of two to seven years. The restrictions will depend on the national law and policy of the original Member States, and any bilateral agreements set up with the individual new Member States. The new Member States may also, under certain conditions, restrict access to their labour markets. In practice, this means that citizens from the new Member States are likely to need a work permit to be eligible to work in one of the original Member States during this transition period.

Once the national law restrictions have ended and the principle of free movement of workers is applied across the whole EEA, original Member States cannot request a work permit as a condition of access to the labour market. However, they may still issue work permits to workers from the new Member States for monitoring and statistical purposes.

You can find out more about the specific measures that may restrict access to the labour markets of the EEA through the EURES job mobility portal (<http://europa.eu.int/eures>) or through the Public Employment Service of the Member State where you would like to work.

What do I need to consider before choosing to live and work abroad?

Before starting your job search, get to know more about the employment situation in the other country. The overall European Union unemployment rate is still high and it is not necessarily easier to find a job abroad than it is in your home country. Nonetheless, some sectors of the labour markets in other countries do offer considerable opportunities, such as the tourist sector and the service sector (financial services, management consultancy, construction, IT and some segments of health-care) as well as seasonal work in agriculture.

Living and working in another European country can present certain challenges, such as adapting to a new culture, working in a foreign language, and familiarising yourself with unfamiliar tax and social security systems. You can best prepare yourself by being well informed about the country of your choice.

A useful first port of call for finding out about the employment situation and living and working conditions in another EEA country is the section on 'Living and Working' on the EURES job mobility portal.

1. The following countries belong to the EEA: Austria, Belgium, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden and the United Kingdom. Switzerland has a bilateral agreement with the EU on the free movement of persons and participates in the EURES network.

Will my professional qualifications be accepted in another country?

Regulated professions are restricted to people who hold certain qualifications. They include lawyers, accountants, teachers, engineers, paramedics, doctors, dentists, veterinary surgeons, pharmacists and architects. In some of these professions, a list of recognised and equivalent qualifications has been established across Europe, while in others, the comparison is judged on a case-by-case basis, taking into account the course length and content.

Occupations or professions that are not regulated do not require a specific qualification. Nonetheless, an employee must observe any necessary procedures applicable to that occupation in the host country, and which may be different from the country of origin.

If you want to find out more about whether your national qualifications and certificates are recognised in another EEA Member State, you can contact your National Reference Point concerned with the transparency of vocational qualifications across Europe. They also offer a certificate supplement that helps you describe your skills and competences gained through vocational training in a way that is understandable to employers unfamiliar with the qualification. You can find these contact details via the European Training Village² - an interactive platform providing up-to-date information on vocational education and training in Europe (<http://www.trainingvillage.gr/etv/>).

How do I start searching for a job abroad?

It is perhaps not surprising that the EURES information portal is the most visited one on the European Commission's Europa server. It is the gateway to thousands of job vacancies posted by employers across Europe, and provides comprehensive information on living and working conditions and the labour market situation across the different countries of the EEA. You can also post your CV online and match your CV to available vacancies. Exploring this job mobility portal could therefore be a good place to start your job search.

If you want more personalised advice, you can contact a local or regional employment office that normally has a EURES adviser specialised in job mobility questions. They have access to a range of information tools and can advise on many practical, legal and administrative issues involved in finding and accepting a job abroad. You can find your local EURES adviser via the EURES information portal.

Alternatively, you may want to contact the host country Public Employment Service directly. As an EEA national, you have the same rights in another Member State as that State's own citizens, subject to the transitional arrangements put in place for the new Member States. Ask to speak to a EURES adviser who is experienced in helping foreign citizens.

2. Located in the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (CEDEFOP).

While the Public Employment Service may be the most common way of finding out about job vacancies, there are several alternative routes you can try.

If you are looking for work in a particular professional field, check the specialised magazines that advertise vacancies. You can also look through the advertisements in the newspapers of the country you want to move to. Major public libraries will usually receive them on a regular basis.

Private recruitment agencies focusing on temporary work exist in several countries. Before using them, find out if they charge for their services and check the nature of the employment contracts they offer. Specialised recruitment agencies also exist for certain professions (particularly in the computing or finance sectors) or for top managerial positions. For students, job fairs and career guidance centres can help in the job search.

You may try sending a spontaneous application to targeted companies. Find out as much as possible about the company beforehand, and specify clearly in your letter why you are interested in them and the qualifications and experience you can bring. Many companies have set up their own online recruitment sites, where you can download an electronic application form. Remember that many vacancies are first publicised through word of mouth, so networking can be another effective route to finding a job.

Spending some time in the country of your choice on a traineeship or work placement is an ideal way of getting to know the country and provides the opportunity to job search on the spot. Many large companies organise such work placements.

Are there any guidelines on preparing my CV?

You should ensure that your CV is clear, well-structured and tailored towards the needs of the job. It should also be translated into the host country language, together with your qualifications. Most Member States expect the subject of your degree or diploma to be directly related to the job applied for, while others place less importance on this. The EU has recommended the use of a European Standard CV, suitable for both vocational and academic graduates. This CV may be useful for applying to many job vacancies, as it gives a clear picture of a candidate's aptitude and skills across EU borders. The CV format is currently available in the 13 languages used in the Member States, Iceland, Switzerland and Norway. A link to the website of the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (CEDEFOP) where you can download this CV format is provided via the EURES job mobility portal.

How do I prepare for a job interview?

Good preparation is vital for a successful job interview. Make sure you have background information on the company, and be ready to ask questions both about them and particular aspects of the job. You are likely to be asked to prove your command of the host country language and illustrate how your key skills and attributes fit with the employers' requirements. Many large firms throughout the EU use assessment centres to judge how potential employees would perform in real life situations.